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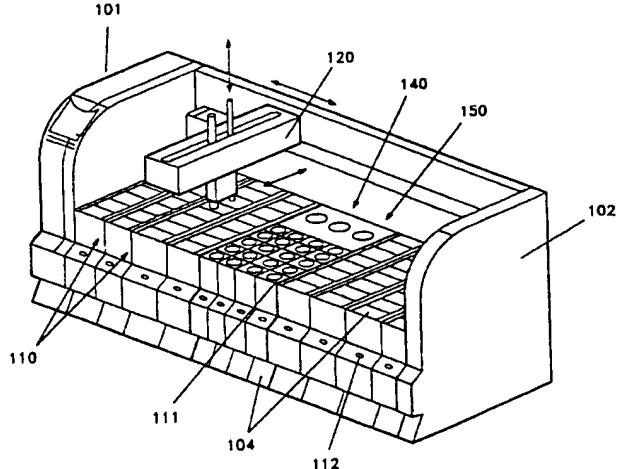
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[Continued on next page]

(54) Title: INFORMATION NOTIFICATION SAMPLE PROCESSING SYSTEM AND METHODS OF BIOLOGICAL SLIDE PROCESSING



(57) Abstract: A sample processing system (101) that may be automated and methods are disclosed where sample(s) (198) are arranged on a carrier element (197) and a process operation control system (171) automatically processes the sample(s) perhaps robotically with an operationally-influential exteriorly-consequential information monitor (402) or a data capture element (414). Significant process details as well as operationally-influential exteriorly-consequential information may be monitored and an automatic notice element (404) may cause notification of a person at some display (415) that may be remote. Various people may be notified, such as an administrator, a supplier, or a manufacturer of an opportunity for some action such as reagent reordering or the like. A simulated motion display may be included to "watch" simulated operation in real time or long after completion of the actual processing.

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A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER

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US CL : 702/22

According to International Patent Classification (IPC) or to both national classification and IPC

B. FIELDS SEARCHED

Minimum documentation searched (classification system followed by classification symbols)

U.S. : Please See Continuation Sheet

Documentation searched other than minimum documentation to the extent that such documents are included in the fields searched

Electronic data base consulted during the international search (name of data base and, where practicable, search terms used)

Please See Continuation Sheet

C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category *	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
Y	US 4,018,565 A (Fletcher, III et al) 19 April 1977 (19.04.1977), Abstract.	26, 40, 41, 68, 82, 83
Y	US 4,404,641 A (Bazarnik) 13 September 1983 (13.09.1983), column 1, line 54 - column 2, line 25.	11, 12, 53, 54
Y	US 4,539,632 A (Hansen et al) 3 September 1985 (03.09.1985), Abstract; column 1, line 59 - column 2, line 28.	29, 32, 71, 74
Y	US 4,886,590 A (Title) 12 December 1989 (12.12.1989), column 2, lines 16-38.	15, 33-36, 39, 57, 75-78, 80
Y	US 4,986,891 A (Sarrine et al) 22 January 1991 (22.01.1991), column 8, lines 20-29.	7, 33, 49, 75
Y	US 5,104,527 A (Clinkenbeard) 14 April 1992 (14.04.1992), column 3, lines 26-64.	91-93, 96-98, 128-130, 133-135



Further documents are listed in the continuation of Box C.



See patent family annex.

* Special categories of cited documents:	
"A" document defining the general state of the art which is not considered to be of particular relevance	"T" later document published after the international filing date or priority date and not in conflict with the application but cited to understand the principle or theory underlying the invention
"E" earlier application or patent published on or after the international filing date	"X" document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered novel or cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is taken alone
"L" document which may throw doubts on priority claim(s) or which is cited to establish the publication date of another citation or other special reason (as specified)	"Y" document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is combined with one or more other such documents, such combination being obvious to a person skilled in the art
"O" document referring to an oral disclosure, use, exhibition or other means	"&" document member of the same patent family
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INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

C. (Continuation) DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category *	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
X	US 5,289,385 A (Grandone) 22 February 1994 (22.02.1994), column 5, line 66 - column 6, line 36; column 7, lines 36-45; column 10, line 18 - column 11, line 10.	1, 43, 85, 92, 96, 97, 122, 129, 133, 134
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Y		2-23, 26-42, 44-65, 68-84, 86-91, 93-95, 98-106, 110-116, 120, 121, 123-128, 130-132, 135-143, 147-153, 157, 158
Y	US 5,316,726 A (Babson et al) 31 May 1994 (31.05.1994), column 2, lines 43-56; column 3, lines 3-6; column 5, lines 9-31; column 6, lines 3-20.	3, 45, 87, 112, 114, 124, 149, 151
Y	US 5,355,304 A (DeMoranville et al) 11 October 1994 (11.10.1994), column 5, lines 29-43.	110, 147
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Y		2-6, 8-10, 15-23, 27, 29-42, 44-48, 50-52, 57-65, 69, 71-84, 92, 96, 98, 112, 129, 133, 135, 149
Y	US 5,958,341 A (Chu) 28 September 1999 (28.09.1999), column 4, lines 33-50.	2, 3, 44, 45, 86, 87, 123, 124
Y	US 6,019,945 A (Ohishi et al) 1 February 2000 (01.02.2000), column 9, lines 6-42.	26, 27, 41, 42, 68, 69, 83, 84, 93, 130
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Y	✓ US 2002/0091593 A1 (Fowler) 11 July 2002 (11.07.2002), paragraphs 34, 50-54.	29, 30, 71, 72
Y,P	US 2003/0032048 A1 (Kim et al) 13 February 2003 (13.02.2003), paragraphs 12, 215.	116, 120, 121, 153, 157, 158
X,P	✓ US 2003/0099573 A1 (Tseung et al) 29 May 2003 (29.05.2003), paragraphs 28-30.	1-6, 43-48
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Y,P		7-23, 26-42, 49-65, 68-84
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Y,P	US 2003/0200111 A1 (Damji) 23 October 2003 (23.10.2003), paragraph 54.	20-23, 62-65

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

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Continuation of B. FIELDS SEARCHED Item 1:

702/19, 21-32, 81-84, 176-178, 182, 184, 185, 187, 188; 700/266, 267; 436/46, 49, 50; 422/63, 67; 340/3.1, 3.3, 3.31, 3.32, 3.9

Continuation of B. FIELDS SEARCHED Item 3:

USPAT, US-PGPUB, JPO, DERWENT, EPO, IBM_TDB

search terms:automatic automated sample process processing preparation, titration, staining, deparaffinization, target retrieval, reagent application, robot, robotic, monitor, alert, notify, alarm, supplier, expiration, historical usage, total reagent, predictive usage, efficacy, segmented computer file, read only file, integral change, common format, proprietary format, software selection, playback